

CIM in Europe: Albert Yang on growth, innovation, and opportunity



Albert Yang

CIM is an established US firm with a focus on private market investments mainly in the US. Headquartered in Los Angeles, it oversees c. \$30bn in assets under management (as of December 31, 2025) with 9 offices globally and has over 30 years history of investing in real estate, infrastructure and private credit. The three founders have built a firm with their passion for development, operational expertise and remain active within the business.

CIM has been active in Europe for many years and it is now looking to expand its client base, assets under management in EMEA and its investment capabilities in Europe. Last January, Albert Yang was appointed as London-based Managing Director of its Institutional Client Group to spearhead business development and client engagement in the region. A year into the role, IPE Real Assets sat down with Yang to discuss his time so far and potential opportunities ahead.

First up, tell us what drew you to CIM Group?

I was aware of the CIM name but did not know them well so, I was intrigued to find out more when the call came. Three main characteristics drew me into a deeper conversation; i) a business that's been through cycles that is still founder owned and led, providing a unified mission and culture ii) a truly vertically integrated manager across three major asset types and iii) still a relatively unknown brand name in the region so I saw an opportunity help grow the business in the region

Let's dig a little deeper, why were these characteristics appealing?

In recent times many boutique managers in the US and Europe have sold stakes in their firms or have been acquired. There are many examples how the DNA of these firms get dissolved over time. I see the Founder led model as a competitive advantage as they have developed a business around operational expertise and innovation.

Being a truly vertically integrated investment firm, CIM controls the entire value chain. With over 900 employees it develops, leases and operates assets with a full in-house team of development managers, leasing and property teams. With boots on the ground in most major markets it provides not only live research but the ability to fix problems quickly when they arise.

What's CIM's footprint in EMEA right now?

We have been active in Europe for many years but officially opened the London office in 2021. We have six people based in London with the

"CIM Group's diversified investment platform – with offerings across the alternative asset classes including real estate, infrastructure, and credit – has become more attractive to institutional investors across EMEA. To better serve the growing needs of this client base, we are thrilled to have Albert lead our efforts in this region. His extensive industry experience has been instrumental in strengthening our presence and growing institutional relationships in this key market," said Jason Fisher, Managing Director and Global Head of Institutional Sales who oversees the Institutional Client Group at CIM Group.

Albert Yang brings more than 24 years of experience in private markets to his role at CIM Group with a strong track record in capital formation of real asset strategies and establishing new regional investment capabilities. Most recently, Mr. Yang served as Head of Investor Relations for EMEA at Harrison Street, where he was a founding member of the firm's European Investment platform, a member of the Investment Committee, and led the launch of its European opportunistic and core real estate strategies. Prior to that, Mr. Yang was Head of Business Development at Barings Real Estate Advisers and has held senior positions in the real estate divisions of J.P. Morgan Asset Management, Nuveen, Schroders and Deutsche

majority for client activities and Pavlos Yeorgaroudakis is a Managing Director of investments focused on deal origination and asset management of an existing portfolio. CIM Group has over 24 clients invested across our strategies in EMEA as of 12/31/2026 and this equates to approximately \$3.5bn AUM.

Is CIM seeking investment opportunities in Europe?

Absolutely, as well as increasing our client engagement for existing and prospective investors we are also looking for new investment opportunities. We have capital deploy through direct investments, JVs and possible inorganic growth opportunities. Our goal is to export our expertise and business model to Europe to provide differentiated strategies for investors.

Are there any areas of particular interest in Europe?

We believe the long-term structural drivers in the living and digital sectors will remain strong across Europe in the near term. We are also aware of huge appetite across Europe for real assets with social impact, so we can meet that demand in the future. We have plenty of experience in the US, for example, with our Opportunity Zone strategy, in deploying capital in underserved areas. This is part of our investment DNA where we look to invest in communities through large mixed-use projects like Centennial Yards in Atlanta which we share more on in this feature. We believe there are many opportunities like this across Europe.

Can you give any examples of CIM's entrepreneurship?

The first that springs to mind is Novva, a standalone platform which develops and operates purpose-built hyperscaler data centre campuses in the US. This is a fast-growing, innovative company under CEO, Wes Swenson. CIM backed Wes and his management team with equity from our Infrastructure platform and raised over \$1.4bn of equity to fund new projects. The platform now has over 150 staff and is heading towards its goal of providing clients with sustainable operating facilities at 1 GW of total capacity. Novva also has proprietary design which minimises the impact on the local community in terms of water and power needs. Added to the campus style environment this has resonated strongly with perspective tenants.

You've built an impressive career at leading banks and private markets firms. What motivated you to join CIM?

When I did my due diligence on CIM Group, I discovered a business with longevity and great success. It is still owned and run by the three founders who are really are friends and partners. But while CIM Group is undoubtedly successful, not everyone in Europe is aware of the name or brand. No business is perfect which is the opportunity but I was enthused by the capabilities, the smart people and the ambitious vision the senior team laid out for me. It gave me the challenge to be impactful from day one in the role. And that role is developing the business, not just raising capital.

So what are your primary goals for 2026?

It's relatively simple set of goals; provide world class service to our clients, raise capital and expand the European investment capabilities. The hard part is executing!

We have a number of exciting new strategies in the net lease and private credit space, and some direct European investment opportunities in the near-term so, that will keep our team busy!

About CIM Group

CIM is a community-focused real estate and infrastructure owner, operator, lender and developer. Since 1994, CIM has sought to create value in projects and positively impact the lives of people in communities across the Americas by delivering more than \$60 billion of essential real estate and infrastructure projects. CIM's diverse team of experts applies its broad knowledge and disciplined approach through hands-on management of real assets from due diligence to operations through disposition. CIM strives to make a meaningful difference in the world by



executing key environmental, social and governance (ESG) initiatives and enhancing each community in which it invests.

Since 1994, CIM has completed over 300 discretionary transactions ranging from equity, preferred equity, senior, mezzanine and bridging loans: invested in hotels, offices, retail, office-to-residential conversion, parking and solar farms. These sit on three distinct platforms: real estate, infrastructure and credit.

Apart from platform funds, CIM works with a range of investors across institution type including Sovereign Wealth Funds, Fund of Funds, Global insurers and Pension Funds.

For more information, visit www.cimgroup.com.

Centennial Yards: A Showcase of CIM's Community-Centred Vision

Centennial Yards is just one example that exemplifies CIM Group's commitment to creating vibrant, connected communities that enhance quality of life and foster economic growth. By transforming underutilized land into a dynamic, mixed-use destination, CIM is delivering a project that prioritizes accessibility, cultural experiences, and long-term value for residents and visitors alike.

Centennial Yards is a \$5 billion transformational mixed-use development in Atlanta, the Southeast's biggest and most influential market. As one of the largest and most ambitious city-center developments in the country, Centennial Yards is expected to revitalize 50 acres of underutilized land in the heart of Downtown Atlanta to connect surrounding communities and create several new city blocks at the junction of the rail lines where the city was founded. Once complete, Centennial Yards is expected to offer 8 million square feet of world-class new commercial and residential space comprised of 4 million square feet of dynamic retail, entertainment, modern office, and hotel, and 4 million square feet of new residential, as well as a vibrant public realm that will provide outdoor gathering spaces to all Atlantans and visitors of Centennial Yards. Centennial Yards recently announced the additions of a Live Nation music venue and Cosm to the entertainment district.

Anchored by major Downtown attractions, including Mercedes-Benz Stadium and State Farm Arena, one of the Southeast's largest Sports Entertainment Districts will feature restaurants, bars, a live music venue and other hospitality destinations. With multiple MARTA stations linking the campus with the rest of the city, and in close proximity to the Atlanta Beltline, Centennial Yards is expected to bring increased connectivity, walkability, and 24/7 living to the heart of Atlanta. Centennial Yards Company serves as the master developer of Centennial Yards and consists of a partnership between an affiliate of CIM Group and a group led by Tony Ressler. For more information, visit www.centennialyards.com.

Recent Announcements Driving Momentum at Centennial Yards

- **Hotel Phoenix Grand Opening:** CIM Group announced the grand opening date for Hotel Phoenix, a boutique property that will serve as a hospitality anchor within Centennial Yards, offering elevated accommodations and amenities for visitors to Downtown Atlanta. [Source: November 18, 2025, <https://www.cimgroup.com/press-releases/cim-group-announces-grand-opening-date-for-hotel-phoenix-at-centennial-yards>]
- **The Irish Exit Lease Signing:** The award-winning New York pub, The



Irish Exit, will open its first Atlanta location at Centennial Yards, bringing a celebrated dining and social experience to the heart of the entertainment district. [Source: as of December 9, 2025, CIM Group Signs Lease to Bring Award-Winning New York Pub The Irish Exit to Centennial Yards]

Expanding Culinary and Lifestyle Offerings

- **The Busy Bee,** one of Atlanta's most storied restaurants, has signed a lease for a new 2,985-square-foot location at The Mitchell residential tower in Centennial Yards, the \$5 billion, 50-acre mixed-use development transforming Downtown Atlanta. [Source: CIM Group Signs Lease with Atlanta Soul Food Icon The Busy Bee for New Location at Centennial Yards, January 1, 2026]
- **Shake Shack's First Downtown Atlanta Location:** Centennial Yards will welcome Shake Shack to its growing roster of dining options, marking the brand's debut in Downtown Atlanta and reinforcing the district's appeal as a destination for residents and visitors [Source: as of September 30, 2025, CIM Group and Centennial Yards Company Signs Lease with Shake Shack for First Downtown Atlanta Location in Centennial Yards]
- **Entertainment Enhancements:** With Live Nation and Cosm already announced, these new additions complement a robust lineup of restaurants, bars, and cultural venues designed to create a dynamic, 24/7 environment.

Projects like Centennial Yards demonstrate CIM's ability to deliver transformative, community-focused developments that integrate culture, connectivity, and commerce.

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